

Finding Shelter in Wellesley:



If the event warrants the need for sheltering, the first place to do so is in your own home. In certain types of emergencies, you may need to evacuate your home and relocate to a shelter. The Town's primary emergency shelter is located at the Wellesley Middle School, but while renovations are taking place there, the **TEMPORARY** primary shelter is the **Wellesley High School**.

The Fire Department offers the following Shelter-in-Place Plan for Residential Housing During a Chemical, Biological, or Radiological Emergency:

What Shelter-in-Place Means:

One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency where hazardous materials have been released into the atmosphere is to shelter-in-place. This is a precaution aimed at keeping you safe while you remain indoors. This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm. Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. If you are told to shelter-in-place, follow the instructions provided below.

Why You Might Need to Shelter-in-Place:

Chemical, biological, or radiological contaminants may be released accidentally or intentionally into the environment. Should a chemical release occur, information will be provided by local or state officials via television, radio stations or on the Internet. Local public safety officials may handle smaller chemical releases. You may be contacted about the situation by the Town's telephone emergency notification system *CityWatch*. The important thing is for you to follow instructions of local authorities and know what to do if they advise you to shelter-in-place. *Please call 911 only if you are in immediate danger or having a medical emergency.*

How to Shelter-in-Place At Home:

- Close and lock all windows and exterior doors.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds or curtains.
- Turn off all fans, heating, and air conditioning systems and close the fireplace damper.
- Get your family a disaster supply kit; radio, phone, TV, batteries, first aid, limited food and drinks, and activity materials for kids and adults.
- Go to an interior room without windows that's above ground level. In the case of a chemical threat, an above ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air, and may seep into basements even if the windows are closed.
- Bring your pets with you, and be sure to bring additional food and water supplies for them.

- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room you select and have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cellular telephones may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door and any vents into the room.
- Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told to evacuate or all is safe. Wellesley officials may call for evacuation in specific areas or shelter-in-place in areas of greatest risk.
- Remember that instructions to shelter-in-place are usually provided for durations of a few hours, not days or weeks. There is little danger that the room in which you are taking shelter in will run out of oxygen.

Wellesley officials on the scene are the best source of information for your particular situation. Following their instructions regarding sheltering, food, water, and clean up during and after emergencies is your safest choice. *This information was adapted from The American Red Cross website on Shelter In Place Plans 2003.*

The following are more resources to help you plan accordingly for emergencies.

From the Department of Homeland Security, Are You Ready? <http://www.ready.gov/america/index.html>

Emergency Supplies:



Water, food, and clean air are the essential items for survival. Each family or individual's kit should be customized to meet specific needs, such as medications and infant formula. It should also be customized to include important family documents.

Important Family Documents:

Keep copies of important family records such as insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container.

Have a family communications plan:

<http://www.ready.gov/america/downloads/familyemergencyplan.pdf>

http://www.mass.gov/samh/being_prepared/family_disaster_plan.html